

CLAIMS LISTING

Claim 1: (currently amended) A steam blanket apparatus for blanketing the face of a spinneret with gas comprising:

a spinneret pack body including a spinneret plate having a lower face with an orifice array through which filaments are extruded ~~and an upper body portion~~;

a spin head surrounding the spinneret pack body and defining interior walls, wherein the spin head includes a metallic plate extending below the spinneret pack body;

an annular space disposed between the interior walls of the spin head and the spinneret pack body;

an external supply source of gas to supply steam into the annular space, such that the steam flows in the annular space around the spinneret pack body and along the spinneret pack body in a primarily downward axial direction; and

a steam distribution ring abutting the spin head and removably mounted to the spin head, the steam distribution ring including a skirt portion generally perpendicular to the distribution ring and situated to deflect the flow of steam from the annular space toward the spinneret orifice array and wherein the steam distribution ring is removable from the spin head without removing the spinneret pack body from the spin head.

Claim 2: (cancelled)

Claim 3: (previously amended) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the steam distribution ring is located in a counterbore formed in the spin head plate.

Claim 4: (cancelled)

Claim 5: (cancelled)

Claim 6: (cancelled)

Claim 7: (new) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the steam distribution ring is fabricated from aluminum.